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## Sweden

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### Swedish Climate Labeling became Climate Certification

#### Report Categories:

Trade Policy Monitoring

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#### Report Highlights:

Although last year's intensive debate on climate labeling of food in Sweden more or less died out when the launch of a climate label was postponed indefinitely, the idea has been revived. On June 15, 2010, standards for a climate certification system and Sweden's first two climate-certified food products were presented at a seminar organized by two of the initiators: KRAV and Swedish Seal of Quality.

**General Information:**

On June 15, 2010, standards for climate certification of food products were launched at a very well attended seminar organized by two of the initiators of the project “Climate Labeling of Food”: KRAV (a key player on the Swedish organic market) and Swedish Seal of Quality (conventional or integrated production). Among the speakers were the Minister of Environment, the Director General of the Swedish Board of Agriculture and several experts within the area.

Milk from seven farms in Uppland and tomatoes from Sörmland were the first two products in Sweden to receive a climate certification and they were also presented at the seminar. As an example, in order for greenhouse grown tomatoes to receive climate certification, the greenhouse has to use renewable energy for heating.

The developing of the certification system has taken three years. The certification is based on criteria such as measures to reduce the negative climate effects in food production and distribution. The certification system covers the entire production chain from farm to store including packaging and transports. The climate certification scheme presents a good climate alternative within each product category based on scientific background documents but does not give a carbon dioxide emission figure.

**Background:**

In 2007, two of Sweden’s major certification bodies, KRAV and Swedish Seal of Quality initiated a project to develop a climate labeling system for the food chain. Later, some of the major players within the Swedish food industry joined the project: Milko, Lantmännen, the Federation of Swedish Farmers, Scan and Skånemejerierna. The Swedish government is providing financial support and has been following the project closely.

The purpose was to create a certification system that will reduce the negative climate effects of food production and distribution and give consumers a chance to make a conscious climate choice as well as strengthening the competitiveness of the food producers.

The climate certification is formed as a supplement to already existing labeling and will only be allowed in combination with another certification scheme that certifies sustainable food production, for example the Swedish organic label KRAV or the Swedish food quality label Swedish Seal. The system will present a good climate alternative within each product category, guaranteeing to the consumer that substantial improvements have been made. The first round includes only food products produced in Sweden, but in the future foreign food processors will also have access to this voluntary certification system.

Today, criteria have been set for plant production, greenhouse production, milk production, beef production, pig production, egg production, fishing and transports. Standards for other product categories such as lamb production, chicken production, processing and packaging will follow in the

fall of 2010. After that, standards for aquaculture and imported products will be developed, probably sometime in 2011.

Recent studies show that there is consumer interest in climate friendly products in Sweden and over 50% of consumers would like to see a climate label on the products. However, not everyone is enthusiastic about climate labeling on food products. The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation has been arguing that a climate label overshadows other types of environmental influence, such as eutrophication, increased use of fertilizers or threats to biodiversity. Other critics include complaints about imported products being treated unfairly and consumers getting confused by yet another quality label. This is what caused both KRAV and Swedish Seal to decide to incorporate climate consideration into their own labels and thus avoid double-labeling. After the project is finished, it will be up to the market to decide how to make use of the climate certification system

More information about the Swedish climate labeling project can be found at:  
<http://www.klimatmarkningen.se/in-english/>

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